



## LAKE FARM PARK ACADEMY

### Minutes of Parent Council 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016

Mr Horsman welcomed parents to the Spring term Parent Council. He outlined the agenda for the meeting, which included feedback from Miss Austin on support and events for parents, a presentation from Michael Bale, Deputy Operations Manager at Pabulum (the school's caterers) and discussion about How to Help meetings. The meeting would finish with an opportunity for discussion of other items that parents would like to raise.

#### Update from Miss Austin (Pupil & Families Worker)

Miss Austin began by reminding parents about her role within the school. She explained that the Pupil & Families worker is there as a support for both parents and pupils. She can offer support and guidance with parenting issues and concerns, as well as behavioural and personal concerns or worries.

Miss Austin talked about the success of the ESOL classes recently held at the school. There had been a good turnout by parents and the majority had attended until the completion of the course. Miss Austin is in discussions about offering further ESOL courses later in the year, with a focus on literacy skills.

Miss Austin also highlighted two other courses that would be hosted by the school during the Summer term: Positive Parenting and Positive Steps. Information will be sent out to parents about signing up for these events after the Easter holidays.

Miss Austin reminded parents that at Afternoon Tea on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March, Lynne Laverty from ADHD & Autism Care and Support would be visiting to talk to parents. A parent asked if this was only for parents who have a child with autism. Miss Austin explained it would be particularly useful for parents of pupils with Autism, but was open to all parents to attend. She also reminded parents to make good use of Barra Hall Children's Centre if they have children under 5 years old. A copy of their timetable for March-April is on display in the noticeboard on the playground. Miss Austin also has copies of the timetables if parents would like one.

Miss Austin finished by talking about upcoming social events. We are planning a sporting event for Sports Relief. This will take place on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March, and will involve pupils running the equivalent of a marathon. Parents felt this would be a great idea, particularly encouraging the children to be active. The school is also planning a Summer fair to take place on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July. Parents talked about some of the possible activities we could have. Miss Austin asked for volunteers to help with planning for this event.

## Pabulum

Michael Bale, Deputy Operations Manager at Pabulum, joined the meeting. He began by talking about Pabulum, their ethos and visions, and the types of schools they work with. Michael shared the Food Standards document that school caterers must adhere to when producing school menus. He highlighted some of the specific requirements that must be followed regarding nutritional content. He discussed the process for putting a menu together.

Michael highlighted how important feedback is for Pabulum. He mentioned that he regularly asked pupils about school dinners and that they usually give him very honest answers. For example, he said that Salmon Lasagne had been removed from the menu because it was not popular with pupils. A parent asked about the uptake of school meals. Mr Horsman replied that uptake was good; the majority of pupils had a hot meal every day. He talked about the research about the impact that this can have on pupils' concentration. Another parent asked about theme days - the school has run some already this year and is aiming to hold one every month. A parent mentioned these are popular with the children.

A parent asked about whether ingredients lists could be published. Michael said this would be difficult as some items on the menu have a long list of ingredients. He informed parents about a new app Pabulum have brought out, which would provide parents with information about the daily menu on their phone, and would also provide links to allergen information. Another parent asked about whether palm oil and modified maize starch were used. Michael checked with the kitchen staff and found out that they were not used.

Michael finished by sharing a chocolate and beetroot cake with parents. He discussed how additional fruit and vegetables are built into the menu without pupils realising; for example, the pizza bases Pabulum make have additional vegetables in them.

Parents thanked Michael for taking the time to meet with them.

## How to Help meetings

Mr Horsman asked if had attended How to Help meetings this term or during the Autumn. He explained that turn out had been low, and he wanted some feedback to try to find out why this might be the case.

Some parents present said they had attended the Y1 meeting the previous day. They had found it useful and liked the way the information was presented to them. Mr Horsman asked if there were other areas parents would like the school to focus on. One parent requested a session on Maths for Y1. Mr Horsman will organise for a Maths focus in the Summer term. Mr Horsman asked about timings of the meetings. He explained it was difficult to find a time that would suit all parents, but that running them during the school day seemed to be the most popular option. Parents agreed. One suggested at the beginning of the year to send a questionnaire to parents asking for ideas about content for meetings and also do indicate what

times would be most suitable for them to attend. Another parent asked if the school would stop running the meetings if turnout remained low; Mr Horsman assured the Parent Council that we would continue to offer these sessions in all year groups.

### **Other Discussion Items**

Mr Horsman asked parents if they had any other items they wanted to discuss. One parent raised a concern that pupils weren't given enough opportunities to drink water during the school. Mr Horsman explained that children have access to water bottles in their classrooms during the day. Water is provided on all tables in the dinner hall, and there is a drinking fountain for pupils to use on the playground. Mr Horsman said he would give a reminder to all staff to be encouraging the children to drink water regularly, particularly when the weather turns warmer.

Another parent asked about the possibility of offering a Coding Club and a Chess Club. Mr Horsman explained that he would ask staff if there was anyone who would be interested in running clubs like this. It was suggested that parents could be asked if they would like to run a club if they had expertise in a particular area.

A parent asked if the school was planning to subscribe to any websites that pupils could use at home. One parent mentioned that she thought Schoolbug was a good program. Mr Horsman explained that the school had recently purchased Purple Mash, which the children would be able to access at home. Usernames and passwords would be handed out at parents' evening.

It was requested that parents received more frequent information about what the children were learning each week. Mr Horsman replied that each year team sent out a letter at the beginning of term outlining what the pupils would be covered during that term, but that he would speak to teachers about sending something out more regularly than this.

A parent raised a concern that sometimes parents were not contacted if their child was ill at school. Mr Horsman explained that if a child was visibly ill, had vomited or had a temperature, then parents would be contacted. Staff remind pupils to tell an adult if they feel unwell. A first aider will make a judgement about whether a child is well enough to remain in school or not.

Mr Horsman finished by thanking parents for their contributions to the meeting, and that the minutes from the meeting would be made available on the website.